

stated that the jesters' attacks on religion "were not aimed at religion so much as at its representatives." But, on page 167, it is said that "jokers can rarely resist desanctifying the sacred with their laughter." Isn't "sacred" associated with God, prayer, and grace? Representatives are another category as the first reference on page 159 distinguishes so well. The reference on page 167 seems to have come from a different frame of mind.

Likewise, in Chapter 2 several pages (142–46) give examples of Chinese rulers executing jesters for their offensive remarks. But in Chapter 3 the following summary appears: "In China there seems little indication that anybody, religious or secular, disapproved of court jesters as such, although people did occasionally voice strong criticism when they felt the jester had gone too far in his mockery" (177). Perhaps, since Chapter 3 is entitled "Religion, Erudition, and Irreverence," what is meant is that jesters could poke fun at anyone with impunity as long as the butt of the joke was not a ruler. Nevertheless, the images of executions clash with the statement that people in the past did "occasionally voice strong criticism" of jesters.

*Fools are Everywhere* shows the existence of court jesters in many countries. It can provide ideas for further study and analysis. The book succeeds in presenting the general characteristics of jesters, especially the classic jesters of England and China. Above all, it takes away the illusion that only Shakespeare's England enjoyed such characters and introduces readers to the rich traditional court fool lore in China.

David R. MAYER  
Nanzan University  
Nagoya, Japan

## JAPAN

FITZHUGH, WILLIAM W. and CHISATO O. DUBREUIL, Editors. *Ainu: Spirit of a Northern People*. Washington D.C.: Arctic Studies Center, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, 2001. 415 pages. Color and b/w illustrations, maps, checklist of artifacts, bibliography, index. Paper US\$49.95; ISBN 0-9673429-0-2. (Distributed by University of Washington Press, Seattle)

*Ainu: Spirit of a Northern People* is an impressive and beautiful book, rich in elaborate illustrations of Ainu artifacts. It also includes drawings and photographic images of the Ainu by early visitors such as Japanese artists (including those who produced the *Ainu-e*), merchants, traders, explorers, exploiters, curators, and ethnographers. The book is a catalog published in association with an exhibition of the same title organized by the Arctic Studies Center, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution. It contains an extensive list of Ainu illustrations, a detailed index, a thorough bibliography, and essays on artifacts and plates of famous and notable Ainu collections that can be found in museums and exhibition halls around the world. Bringing together the works of prominent scholars in the Ainu field as well as incorporating works written by the Ainu, *Ainu: Spirit of a Northern People* is a treasure for non-Japanese and non-Russian speaking researchers with an interest in the material, written and gathered, on the Ainu.

Starting with an essay entitled "Ainu Ethnicity: A History," the organizing principle behind the book, as well as the exhibition, is clearly presented. The organization of the book and exhibition relates the concept of ethnicity to "Ainu-ness" at different periods in history

and from different thematic perspectives, emphasizing the fact that the Ainu people are not a monolithic group. The Ainu of Hokkaido, Sakhalin, and the Kuriles have inhabited different ecological zones and have had different social, material, and spiritual cultures.

The main body of *Ainu: Spirit of a Northern People* (Parts I through V) consists to a considerable extent of accounts and analyses of the former ways of the Ainu, focusing on their history and origins, language and material culture, as well as on their social and ceremonial life. In Part VI, the last part of the volume, entitled "Ainu Present and Future," issues of contemporary social, political, and cultural change are examined. In this section emphasis is placed on Ainu *shinpō* (new legislation on Ainu) as a new beginning, on indigenous politics at the international level, and on the Ainu view of themselves as belonging to a global community. With the attempt to cover most of the written material on the Ainu, the articles deal with a wide range of themes. The readers are taken on a journey that guides them through the historical context, exploring, among other things, Ainu early contacts with neighboring groups of people, trade and treaty procedures, and the Ainu resistance to invading groups and cultures. Readers are also introduced to Japanese exploitation of the Ainu and their territories as well as to the assimilation procedures, which included a stigmatizing exposure to tourism that eventually led the Ainu to take control of Ainu tourism, and which prepared the way for the contemporary revitalization of various aspects of the Ainu's former ways. The majority of the essays in the volume deal with some aspect of the hardship the Ainu suffered due to the Japanese official assimilation policy. This was a policy that denied them the right to speak their own language and to live in accordance with their own ways; it prohibited, among other things, the custom of women's lip-tattoos, and also the performance of the *iyomante*, the bear-sending ceremony. Up to today the essential political issues have been ignored, with most studies concentrating primarily on the culture and language of the Ainu.

The articles are arranged according to theme. One theme is *Ainu-e*, which is a genre of drawings and paintings of Ainu subjects by Japanese artists over a period of six hundred years. The importance attributed to the *Ainu-e* relates both to the accuracy in illustration and detailed descriptions of the Ainu, which were added in the margins by artists. Other themes include the following: *chise* (home), *kotan* (settlement), Ainu ecosystem(s), the hunting and gathering activities of the Ainu and the techniques attached to them, the whale and whaling techniques, the sociality (social organization[s]) of the Ainu, Ainu wood carving and basketry traditions and techniques, Ainu clothing and ornamentation, Ainu medical culture, Ainu shamanism, and mythology. A reoccurring topic is the *iyomante*. (The bear plays a major role in the lives of the Ainu.) Ainu ritual objects, *inaw* (messengers to the gods), *ikupasuy* (prayer sticks), *yukar*, *qamuy yukar* (Ainu prayers), are also given considerable attention in this volume. The attention given to these objects and practices is undoubtedly warranted. Great importance was attributed to them in former as well as contemporary days, and they have attracted the attention of researchers who have documented them extensively. Today these objects and practices are central elements in the Ainu *shinpō*. Discussions on origins of the Ainu and their language, both of which have long been a scholarly mystery and a source of speculation, are also granted a substantial amount of space. It is pointed out that although an extensive amount of research has been devoted to the origins of the Ainu, the mystery of their origins still remains unsolved. The theory in fashion, according to one of the articles, is that the Ainu, as well as the Ryūkyūans (i.e., inhabitants of the Okinawa Islands), represent more-or-less direct descendants from the Neolithic people of the Jomon culture, the prehistoric culture of Japan. As far as the Ainu language is concerned, it is emphasized that there are numerous theories, but no agreement on any one of them. The once popular theory that the Ainu language belongs to the Caucasoid group of languages is now largely dismissed—the resemblances between Ainu words and words belonging to the Caucasoid group of lan-

guages are supposed to be purely “accidental.” One of the essays focuses on issues related to Ainu language revitalization, and emphasizes the fact that although the Ainu language has been considered a dying language since the time it was first studied by linguists, the Ainu language is alive and well.

The authors of the essays throughout the book approach the Ainu as having a “living culture” that has exhibited much creativity. This is a fresh and highly welcomed approach, considering the fact that research on the Ainu has persistently viewed them as extinct, or almost extinct, groups of people. Although the majority of the articles in this volume deal with some aspects of Ainu “living culture,” *Ainu: Spirit of a Northern People* stands as a testimony to previous researchers’ preoccupation with the preservation of the customs of “a dying people,” and to their analyses of the Ainu—particularly their ways and belief system(s)—as primitive, retarded, marginalized and peripheral, characterizations which were legitimized by the use of the term “traditional.” Ethnocentric views, preoccupation with whatever theory was on the agenda, intellectual and political attempts to try to control the direction of research, and the dismissal of the knowledge and arguments of the Ainu if they differed from theories cherished by the scientists are all factors that resulted in innumerable lost opportunities to gain insight into the former ways and lives of the Ainu. Yet, *Ainu: Spirit of a Northern People* stands also as a testimony to the fact that scientists change their perspectives, reconsider their views, and embrace alternative perceptions and interpretations of the material and the people they are working with. In this volume, different from many earlier studies of the Ainu, the Ainu voices are loud and clear, and the ethnocentrism of previous historical and ethnographic presentations is clearly pointed out. It is satisfying to know that the pioneering thoughts that I introduced some fifteen years ago, shared then by only a handful of researchers, have now become mainstream.

*Ainu: Spirit of a Northern People* is a book I wish I had had access to in the middle of the 1980s when I was working with the Hokkaido Ainu. I find the book a valuable asset to the body of scholarly literature on the Ainu, and I strongly recommend it.

Katarina SJÖBERG  
University of Lund  
Lund, Sweden

JOSEF KREINER, Editor. *Sources of Ryūkyūan History and Culture in European Collections*. Monographien aus dem Deutschen Institut für Japanstudien der Philipp-Franz-von-Siebold-Stiftung, Band 13. Munich: iudicium verlag, 1996. 396 pages. Cloth DM 108. ISBN 3-89129-493-X.

This anthology contains the papers given at the international symposium “Sources of Ryūkyūan History and Culture in Europe,” which took place in October 1994 at a meeting of the European Association of Japanese Resource Specialists (EAJRS) in Bonn. The papers published in this book can be classified into four groups:

1. History of the Ryūkyūs
2. Studies on the European reception of Ryūkyūan material and immaterial culture
3. Studies on the technology and history of material culture
4. Data about the existing collections in Europe, America, and Japan, including bibliographic data of publications about individual objects and the culture of the Ryūkyūs in general